



DATCP Secretary Romanski Joins Gov. Evers in Thanking Wisconsin's Farmers

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Editor's note: A photo of Gov. Evers and Secretary Romanski can be found [here](#).

A commentary by Gov. Evers and Secretary Romanski of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP)

MADISON, Wis. – At this time of year, you don't have to drive far in Wisconsin to see combines running in the fields, tractors moving equipment, and trucks hauling grain. Wisconsin farmers are working from sunrise to long past sunset to harvest their crops and prepare their farms for winter. During this busy time, it is fitting that we all share our appreciation to farmers. On National Farmers Day, October 12, 2022, please join us in thanking Wisconsin farmers.

Wisconsin farmers are the foundation of the state's robust food supply chain, and it all starts on each of our state's farms. Wisconsin farmers understand that our soil and water resources are our strength, and they work tirelessly to ensure that our farmland is maintained for future generations. To help with that effort, the Governor's Task Force on Climate Change, which included input from Wisconsin farmers themselves, recommended the continuation of programs such as Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grants. Following these recommendations, there have been critical investments to increase the funding for this program to support farmers who implement conservation practices. We were also able to increase funding for county conservation staff so farmers implementing climate-smart practices have access to boots on the ground assistance.

Wisconsin farmers are a leader in producing a variety of crops including potatoes, vegetables, cranberries, ginseng, and more. The state's farmers rely on a thriving processing industry to transform their quality products into the nutritious and delicious foods consumers rely on for their families. In Wisconsin, we have worked to ensure farmers and processors have the resources they need to keep their businesses moving forward. In the past biennial budget, we were able to double the funding for the Dairy Processor Grants. With this extra funding, we invested in 19 dairy processors this year alone, improving their profitability and making long-term investments so farmers continue to have a processor for their milk for years to come.

We have also made major investments in Wisconsin's livestock and meat industry so farmers don't experience delays in getting their animals to market. There was a meat processing grant program in the most recent budget, and with the help of our federal funds, we provided \$15 million to assist meat processors seeking to expand and build resiliency in the industry. With a targeted investment in workforce development for the livestock and meat processing industry, we have also been able to support the expansion of high school, university, and technical college programming to help grow the number of skilled workers for the industry.

As Wisconsin farmers produce top-notch products, we are working to increase export opportunities. The Wisconsin Initiative for Agricultural Exports (WIAE) is a program designed to help boost the export of Wisconsin dairy, meat, crops, and other products by 25% over five years. We are, in collaboration with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, enhancing Wisconsin's trade promotion activities, designating funds for agribusinesses, and fostering innovation in exporting. Wisconsin products are one of a kind, and we know that, with the help of WIAE, Wisconsin products will have a better chance to become a household name across the world.

Wisconsin agriculture generates a \$104.8 billion economic impact to our state's economy each year, and each dollar starts with our farmers. Farmers contribute to their local schools, businesses, and communities, benefiting the entire state. We will continue to work to make sure farmers have the resources they need. Their success is our state's success, and that's why we should continue to strategically invest in and support them.

So, today, please join us in not only recognizing and thanking those who put food on our tables, but in supporting them in any way you can. Buy locally-grown Wisconsin products at a farmers market. Slow down for farm equipment on the roads. Visit an agritourism site this fall. Say thank you when you see a farmer in your community.

Thank you, farmers! We wish you a safe and plentiful harvest season. We are grateful for your hard work, lifelong commitment, and dedication to feed the world. You, as farmers, are one of Wisconsin's strongest assets, and we will continue to work to celebrate your success and ensure you have the tools you need to produce and thrive.

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